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A STRATEGIC CONCEPT FOR A NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PROGRAM *
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLD WAR OPERATIONS
UNDER NSC 10/5.

NSC REVIEW
 COMPLETED

1. Almost all governmental policies and actions have psychological content in that they bear on the minds and wills of other peoples. An attempt to formulate a national psychological impact in this sense would encompass every aspect of governmental activity. This would be an effort of unmanageable proportions. In order to formulate a national psychological strategy that will usefully subserve the national policy it is necessary to divide the task into separate aspects of manageable proportions. When we ask, "What can usefully be said about ways and means of bringing about a retraction of Soviet power and influence?" we have selected one such aspect and have stated it in such a way that we can perhaps deal with it.



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* In accordance with Presidential Directive of 4 April 1951, which establishes the PSB as responsible for the formulation and promulgation, as guidance to the departments and agencies represented for psychological operations of over-all national psychological objectives, policies and programs, and which defines psychological operations as including all activities under NSC 59/1 and 10/2.

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3. NSC 10/5, paragraph 2, directed "the Psychological Strategy Board to assure that its strategic concept for a national psychological program includes provision for covert operations designed to achieve the objectives in paragraph 1 above."

4. It is the object of this paper to outline a strategic concept for a national psychological program with particular reference to cold war operations under NSC 10/5. These operations are primarily covert in character, but we believe a paper addressed to such operations will provide a concept applicable to overt psychological operations under NSC 59/1 as well.

5. The general objective of psychological operations in the cold war can be subsumed under the general heading of contributing to the "retraction and reduction of Soviet power and influence" whether by operations designed to weaken Soviet power in the Communist orbit or by operations designed to weaken Soviet influence by strengthening the free world.

6. Our national strategy, as defined in NSC 20/4, paragraph 20, is to "endeavor to achieve our general objectives by methods short of war." This national strategy calls for efforts to "encourage and promote the gradual retraction of undue Russian power and influence from the present perimeter areas around traditional Russian boundaries. . .; to eradicate the myth by which people remote from Soviet military influence are held in a position of subservience to Moscow; (and) to create situations which will compel the Soviet government to recognize the practical undesirability of acting on the basis of its present concepts"

7. The cold war can be expected to continue in one form or another as long as the Soviet Union, which is to say, the Bolshevik Party, adheres to the aims and methods which it publicizes within as well as outside the Party. Recognition of this - particularly public recognition - is necessary for understanding and support of continuity of effort. The

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the only certain means of forcing such changes. One is excluded, and the other so far beyond our current capabilities as to be presently unfeasible.

8. We are unable at present to propose a strategic concept which outlines a program designed to bring about a final solution of the cold war because (a) we do not have and cannot clearly foresee the time when we will have the capabilities, and (b), because without adequate capabilities the risks involved are clearly disproportionate to the probabilities of success. The time required to develop the necessary capabilities is so great that the nature of an acceptable solution cannot be determined with sufficient accuracy to serve as a guide. As our capabilities increase, flexibility and opportunism in the light of events appear presently more desirable than commitment to too specific a goal.

9. We should continue to develop our capabilities for assisting revolution and to continue to re-appraise the situation. This will require both the development of further capabilities for the exploitation of existing techniques and a major program for the development of new techniques and approaches. It is possible that cumulative retraction of Soviet power and influence, together with future events and the inherent problems with which the Soviet government and the Bolshevik Party are faced may eventually bring about sufficient change in their aims and methods to provide an acceptable solution. Efforts to bring about this cumulative retraction as opposed to a program for a definitive solution may be regarded as the interim strategic concept for a national psychological program.

10. Within the limits imposed by the terms of our national strategy and the present level of our covert capabilities it is possible to advance certain general criteria for operations under 10/5, to test broad fields of possible covert action against these criteria, and from a combination of the two to give more precise form to the psychological operations which should be prosecuted in accordance with the interim

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strategic concept, and to provide an indication of priorities. Overt propaganda should be consistent with these priorities, and should give appropriate support in accordance with them.

11. The general criteria which present covert operations under the interim strategic concept should meet are those of effectiveness, feasibility, acceptable risk, and flexibility.

a. Effectiveness: The importance of the effects which successful operations may be calculated to have in reducing Soviet influence and power or in strengthening the free world against the exertion of Soviet influence and power must be appreciable and must warrant the effort, cost and risk of the operation. In general, priorities should be proportional to anticipated effectiveness.

b. Feasibility: Our capabilities in terms of trained manpower or material, and local or international support, must be adequate to give reasonable promise of success to the operation in the face of such capabilities as the Communists may have to frustrate it.

c. Acceptable risk: The degree to which the undertaking or successful conclusion of the operations may be calculated to provoke military reaction from the Communists must be sufficiently limited as to be an acceptable risk in terms of our national strategy.

d. Flexibility: Operations should be of a type which lend themselves within reasonable limits to adaptation or modification to exploit such opportunities or undertake such objectives as may become possible or advisable subsequent to actual initiation of the operation.

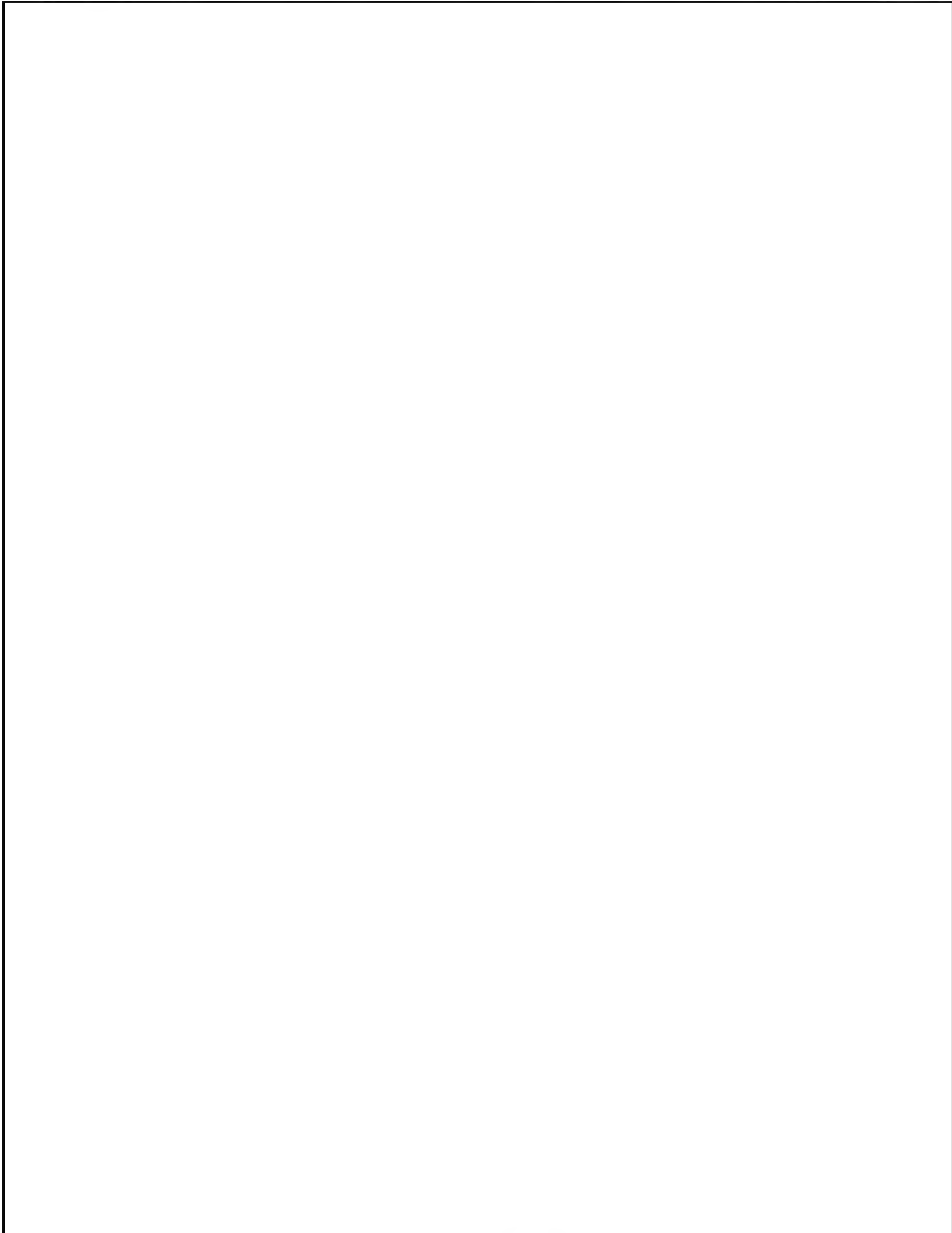
12. There is a wide range of activity currently in process to bring about the retraction of Soviet power and influence which should continue. Many of these activities, although in themselves incapable of producing clear and incontrovertible gains, are of great value in supporting overt policies which can be expected to be effective. Omission from the following discussion of many existing projects, does not imply that they are not

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considered of value, but rather that the approved projects should continue as presently conceived and planned, insofar as they meet the above criteria.



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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that the cumulative retraction of Soviet power and influence in accordance with our capabilities and subject to the limitation of acceptable risk be accepted as the interim strategic concept for a national psychological program.
2. It is recommended that the responsible agencies place greatest emphasis on the three broad fields of activity identified in paragraph 13 above.
3. It is recommended that the responsible agencies give priority within those broad fields to determining the detailed practicability and desirability of proceeding along the lines indicated under each category described in paragraph 14 above. It is further recommended that where such studies indicate that the foregoing criteria will be met, the indicated actions be given priority in both national and agency programs proportionate to their probably effectiveness.
4. It is also recommended that our covert capabilities continue to be developed with increasing vigor along all lines whose eventual employment may be expected to bring about more drastic reductions in Soviet power and influence.
5. It is also recommended that reappraisals of this interim strategic concept be made in the light of future developments annually and also as additional categories of action appear to meet the specified criteria.

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NUMBER OF PAGES 10		
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